AN EVALUATION OF PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IN KALABURAGI DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA STATE

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Research Guide

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1.1. Background

The present study is introductory in nature and spells out the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypothesis framed and methodology used in the study. The Public Distribution System (PDS) in India is more than half-a century old as rationing was first introduced in 1939 in Bombay by the British Government as a measure to ensure equitable distribution of food grains to the urban consumers in the face of rising prices. Thus, rationing in times of crisis like famine was the historical precursor to the national policy of stabilization and management of food grains. Among the number of Price Control Conferences held during 1940-42, the sixth, held in September, 1942 laid down the basic principles of a Public Distribution System for India. The Food Department, set up in December, 1942, formulated an All India Basic Plan that dealt with issues such as procurement, contracts for purchasing agents, public distribution, inspection and storage.

The basic objective of the Food policy was stabilization of food prices in the economy. With inflation spiraling and the food situation deteriorating persistently in many parts of the country, the Food Grains Policy Committee (1943) recommended for the introduction of rationing in urban centers with a population of more than 100,000. The consequent food distribution was exclusively focused on the urban centers. That with partition, India bequeathed 82% of the population of the subcontinent, 75% of the cereal production and 69% of the irrigated area aggravated the food situation. However, under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, a policy of decontrol was announced in December, 1947. Policies kept changing withthe reintroduction of controls in September, 1948, shift to decontrol during 1952-54 and recourse to controls in 1957.

The Food Grains Enquiry Committee (Ashok Mehta Committee Report, 1957) argued for controls of a flexible indirect nature, opening of more Fair Price Shops (FPSs) and continuing the zonal policy of bringing together surplus and deficit areas within zones, controlling prices within each zone. The import of food grains during 1958-66, mostly under P.L. 480, induced the U.S. to take such measures as withholding grains in the last minute and imposing conditional ties on its policy on currency valuation, foreign trade and production, pricing and distribution of fertilizers. In 1966, imports had reached to about 14% of the food grains availability in the country which,

with consequent glut in the market, might partly have resulted in the crisis in domestic production during 1964-66.

In India the Green Revolution and food self-sufficiency brought about a new dimension in the food grains management. The focus was on fair procurement price for farmers to insulate them from market anomalies, buffer stocking, control of market prices and public distribution of essential commodities. Food Corporation of India was established in 1965, to function as an autonomous organization, working on commercial lines, to undertake purchase, storage, movement, transport, distribution and sale of food grains and other food stuff. The Study Team on FPSs headed by V.M. Dandekar (1966) observed that the foreign supplies had proved inadequate in meeting the increasing demand for food grains through FPSs. The Team recommended that the pricing in FPSs should be market oriented and that they should maximize their share in the market. The Food Grains Policy Committee (1966) advocated formulation of a National Food Budget on the basis of zonal restrictions, introduction of statutory rationing in bigger urbanareas, intensification of procurement, building up buffer stocks and a more important role for Food Corporation of India in inter-state trade.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) had, *inter alia*, envisaged that the Public Distribution System would "have to be so developed that it remains hereafter a stable and permanent feature of our strategy to control prices, reduce fluctuations in them and achieve an equitable distribution of essential consumer goods". Essential Supplies Programme, introduced in 1982 as the 17th point of the New 20 Point Programme, intended to expand the PDS through more FPSs, including mobile FPSs, to make available text books and exercise books to students on a priority basis and to promote strong consumer protection movement. The number of FPSs increased from 2.30 lakhs in January, 1980 to 3.02 lakhs in January, 1984. While the Government of India had itself shouldered the responsibility of supplying essential commodities, viz., wheat, rice, sugar, kerosene, edible oils and soft coke, the State Governments had the option to add other items considered essential by them.

Effective working of the Programme was predicated on ensuring multi-faceted co-ordination, as the essential commodities were handled by different governmental agencies; food grains by the FCI, sugar by the FCI/State Civil Supplies

Corporations/cooperatives, import and distribution of edible oils by the State Trading Corporation, soft coke by Department of Coal and Coal India Limited and kerosene by Indian Oil Corporation/Bharat Petroleum/Hindustan Petroleum. The Evaluation study conducted by the PEO on Essential Supplies Programme (1985) revealed that major weaknesses and deficiencies of PDS did not exist in either the lack of sufficient coverage or want of necessary administration machinery but in certain operational inadequacies such as irregular supply (to the FPSs and inturn to consumers) and poor quality leading to non-drawl, non-lifting of sanctioned quotas by the FPSs in the rural areas.

In 1984, Government of India created the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies with two departments namely Department of Food and Department of Civil Supplies; the latter being in charge of PDS. During the Seventh Five Year Plan, an Advisory Committee on PDS headed by the Union Minister for Food & Civil Supplies was constituted by the Government of India to review its working from time to time. Consumer Advisory Committees were to be constituted at district, block/tehsil levels.

In 1992, the Essential Supplies Programme gave way to Revamped PDS (RPDS) with focus on disadvantageous areas. Under RPDS, 1752 blocks, falling under Desert Development Programme (143), Drought Prone Areas Programme (602), Integrated Tribal Development Projects (1073) and Designated Hill areas (69), were identified as economically and socially backward. (135 of them overlapped). Essential commodities- wheat, rice, levy sugar, imported edible oil, kerosene and soft coke were supplied in the RPDS blocks at subsidized prices. Food grains at the rate of 20 Kg per month per family (@5 Kg per capita) was envisaged to be distributed through FPSs. The scheme also envisaged creation of PDS infrastructure, on 50% subsidy and 50% loan basis, in the form of godowns for storing food grains and Mobile Vans for door-step delivery of PDS items to the FPSs and for final distribution of these items in inaccessible areas.

Vigilance Committees were also formulated at different levels to ensure proper distribution. PEO Evaluation of the working of the RPDS (1995) indicated that though the scheme was generally beneficial to the vulnerable section of the population cutting across the regions and states, there were still gaps and constraints in the

implementation, availability ofvery limited door delivery services to FPSs, inadequate facilities for storage at FCI telling upon the quality of grains, FPS level gaps in opening time, working hours, regularity of distribution and communication to consumers, Vigilance Committees not being able to serve their purpose meaningfully and non-consideration of socio-economic and cultural situations regarding preferences of commodities.

Indian agriculture dominated by food grain crops, prior to the Green Revolution, food grain crops dominated Indian agriculture. Even during the initial phase of Green Revolution, this trend did not change except that the seed-fertilizer technology introduced during the mid-60s was largely confined to wheat and rice. However, by the early 1980s, Indian agriculture began to witness crop diversification away from food grains. According to S.D. Sawant, the crop sector saw two different types of area shifts. The first involved transfer of area to wheat and rice crops; mainly from coarse cereals and pulses during the early Green Revolution and the shift was restricted to the irrigated areas of northwestern region and western parts. The second type of area shift was in favour of non-food grains, again at the cost of mainly coarse cereals and benefited oilseed crops more than other crops, such as vegetables and fruits.

In India over the past decade a series of events have brought the question of food security into sharp focus (UNDP, 1999). According to the Food and Agricultural Organization, India alone accounts for over 400 million poor and hungry people. For a nation long inured to scarcity and starvation the problem is ironic: it is the one of plenty. Why in a food surplus nation where buffer stocks are three time what is required for food security, thousands still die of malnutrition and hunger? While the objective of food security has been reached, the fundamental individual right for food has not been reached. The purpose of the present research is to evaluate theimpact of the Indian public Distribution System (PDS) on poverty and food security. The results are of immediate policy interest with respect to the current debate and re-shaping of the Public Distribution System in India.

PDS provides rationed amounts of basic food items (rice, wheat, sugar, edible oils) and other non-food products (kerosene, coal, standard cloth) at below market prices to consumers through a network of fair price shops disseminated over the

country. While measurement of poverty is a heated issue in India (Deaton, 1999, Deaton et.al.2000). The PDS had been criticized for its urban bias and its failure to serve effectively the poorer sections of the population. Since June 1997 PDS turned into the Targeted Public Distribution System, the aim is to target the poorest household by differentiating the access quantities and prices at which one is allow to buy. The differentiation is made with respect to the state official poverty lines. Those households below the poverty line (BPL households) are entitled with ration card that allows them to buy more quantity at a higher subsidized price.

The functioning of the Public Distribution System in India has suffered due to inefficient management over the decades and lack of proper targeting to improve the food security of the poor. Although, India has achieved self-sufficiency in food grain production, and surplus food stocks are available in the FCI godowns across the country, the poor have little access to food as they lack purchasing power. This paradox of surplus food availability in the market and chronic hunger of the poor has brought into sharp focus, the lopsided policies of the government, with regard to food distribution in the country. The PDS evolved from a food rationing system introduced by the British in India during World War II. A fixed amount of food rations were distributed to the entitled families in specific towns/cities through The Department of Food created in 1942 under the Government ofIndia. After the end of the war, the government abolished the rationing system only to reintroduce immediately after independence in 1950 due to inflationary pressures of the economy. Ever since, the Indian government has used the public distribution system as a deliberate policy instrument to overcome chronic food shortages, apart from using it for stabilizing food prices and consumption, in view of fluctuating food production in the country.

At present context of the failure of the PDS system to ensure the food security of the poor, it would be relevant to raise some important questions about the food security policies of the government as well as the need for alternative approaches/paradigms of food security. “The Alternative Public Distribution System (APDS) through the Community Grain Fund” conceived by Deccan Development Society is one such programme that breaks away from narrow framework of government PDS that is solely concerned with procurement and distribution of food grains to the target groups. The

Deccan Development Society (DDS) conceived the APDS programme with an idea of local solutions for local problems. The programme integrates the goals of sustainable agricultural strategies such as bio-diversity and natural resource management with community goals of rural livelihoods, food security and socio-economic empowerment of dalits and women, based on plural values, local customs, practices and indigenous knowledge.

The significance of the PDS framework of sustainable agriculture in ensuring food security of local communities can be put in perspective by understanding different perspectives that informs and motivate different actors, both governmental and non-governmental, in designing and implementing policies to address food security needs of the population.

In India, productivity-oriented perspective that sees Indian agriculture as mostly dominated by small and marginal holdings and as such inherently inefficient is called as first perspective. The votaries of this perspective argue that food insecurity is the result of subsistence farming and lack of marketable surplus to provide for the ever-growing population. To raise farm productivity and incomes the farmers are goaded to go in for more inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, credit etc. In other words it's a continuation of the follies of the green revolution on a much wider scale. A variant on this approach is the reliance on new technologies such as biotechnology and genetics for agricultural productivity and efficiency.

Market-oriented perspective in India argues that it's economically and environmentally expensive for every country to try to achieve national food security via self-sufficiency in everything is the second perspective. It further argues that, a large fraction of world agricultural production is likely to move through international markets in the future. This can ensure global food security as long as there is an open international trading system that permits agricultural products to move freely from agricultural surplus to deficit countries. To ensure national food security, the system must permit food-deficit, low-income countries to export goods in which they can be competitive to earn the foreign exchange necessary to pay for their foodimport needs.

Bio-diversity perspective is the third important perspective. In contrast to the assumptions that small holdings are inherently unproductive and inefficient, this

perspective argues that small holdings are bio-diversity based production systems and great conservatories of genetic resources of the World. The food security of the world depends mostly on the conservation and production of a variety of genetic resources and the role of small farms in ensuring this. The forced introduction of high-yielding seedvarieties is the cause of the loss of farmer-bred seeds, leading to massive genetic erosion and with it the traditional knowledge base of the farming communities. In essence, the food security of the world rests on diversity-the diversity of cultural values of farming communities as well as genetic diversity. Food security requires diversity of germ plasm, of species, of production and distribution systems. Further, it also requires the protection of the human rights-including the inalienable rights of indigenous peoples and farmers' rights. Food security cannot be isolated from issues of equity in land tenure, pricing policies or trade practices in India.

Government of India introduced public distribution system, which is also called as a national good security system under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public distribution and managed jointly with state Government in India. This system was first introduced in 1939 in Bombay by the British Government as a measure to equitable distribution of food grains to the urban consumers in the face of rising prices over the years the system expanded a very largely emerging as a poverty alleviation measure to become a permanent feature food economy in India.

To reduce poverty through the mechanism of delivering minimum requirements of food grains at highly subsidized prices to the population below the poverty line the origin of PDS is an important instrument policy. The PDS through Fair Price Shops (FPS) was first introduced in India in the wake of the Second World War in 1939. Statutory wheat price was fixed in 1941 as a first step in this direction and in 1942 the emphasis was shifted to rice because of reduced supply from Burma. In 1942, when Bengal suffered from the worst famine, the system of fair price shops was turned into the rationing system. The Government of India also appointed a food grains, building up of a food grains buffer-stock through imports, Central Control over procurement and distribution and introduction of rationing. A wheat Commissioner was also appointed by the Government of India to arise the provincial price Controllers, to regulate the distribution of wheat and to acquire wheat through provincial agencies when needed.

The "Food Grains Control Order" was enforced in May, 1942. As a reaction to this hoarding and black-marketing become rampant everywhere and prices started soaring. The reason of or the failure of price control measure were lack of enforcement staff and Central Control over Production and Supplies of grains. Therefore, the Government established the department of food in December, 1942 to purchase food grains and to take care of movements, storage and inspection of food grains stocks. The basic objective of the then emerging policy was stabilization of food prices.[14] In this backdrop, the present study is an attempt to assess the performance of public distribution system in poverty alleviation and food security in the State of Karnataka in general and in Kalaburagi district in particular

1.2. Review of Literature

Shivarajsagar (2009)[1]in the study of "Public Distribution System-A Case Study of Bidar District" observed that majority of cardholders belong to labourers and marginal formers. Similarly if we take age distribution of households, there in the age group 30-35 and 35-40 dominate the domino of ration cardholders in the Bidar district. The distribution of households on the bases of annual income is very important is important for the purpose of government to implement certain social policies, specially for certain income groups (For example there is a concession given to the children who's parental annual income is below Rs.36.000). The survey indicates that vast majority of the households have annual income which is below Rs.35,000 These points are out the fact that the cards have been a backbone to the a labour income groups. The need of education is considered as a means of social change. The welfare programs for the targeted group could be implemented effectively by the government, if people are educated. The literacy rate itself is very low in India.

Mritunjay Prasad Singh, Amita Sinha and G.S.Dokania (2010)[12] in the study of "Public Distribution System, Food Security and Poverty Alleviation Programmes - A Case of Bihar" observed that the foodgrains have to be transported to the godown for storage and from the godowns they have to be taken to the fair price shops. A very meagre amount is paid to the fair price owner and they make up their loss by adopting

corruptmeasures. Hence, the Government should undertake to transport the foodgrainsor the transporter should be paid a sum adequate to defray the actual expenses of the transport.

Ashok Kotwal, Milind Murugkar, Bharat Ramaswami (2011)[19] in their study based on "PDS Forever?". analyzed that there is a case to be made for cash transfers replacing the sale of food through the public distribution system. The article argues that cash transfers offer many advantages over in-kind food transfers, and that their design can address potential pit falls pointed out by critics. The more salient of such objections are discussed, and models for implementing cash transfers based on existing technology and infrastructure are proposed. However, in conclusion, it is recommended dismantling of the Public Distribution System, the decision on the means of delivery should be left to the states.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

Certain concepts used in this study are spelt out below;

1.3.1. Concept of Food Security: The concept of food security has evolved since the First World conference in 1947 and it is now accepted globally that it relates to the access by all people at all times to enough food for an active healthy life, but is used differently at different levels, irrespective of the reference level, food reserve is now considered a criterion for food security of the nation but this is not exclusive. Although food availability has increased along with the growing human population over the last 30 years in India, yet there are still 200 million people suffering from mal nutrition. In India, the food production and food reserve is sufficient but it is not available to all the people in the country and there are wide gaps between and within regions. As feeding people does not nourish them, it is important to increase the accessibility of markets, so that the people who are, directly or indirectly depending on livestock for their livelihoods are able to nourish themselves. In real sense, the food security exists, when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient. Safe and nutrition's food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

1.3.2 What is Food Security?

The World Food Summit (Rome, 1996) which took place at a time of growing international concern over slow growth in global food production and expanding population gave a new impetus to the fight for food security, by focusing attention on the food issues. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security, convened by FAO defines food security as, "when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". This definition forms part of a broader food security frame work that includes policy issues relating to poverty, sustainable agriculture and rural development, food production, stabilization mechanisms, improved access and international trade. The definition adopted at the World Food Summit has been referred to in numerous texts and resolutions since and forms the basis of the international consensus on actions required at global, regional and national levels to achieve world food security.

The definition of food security encompasses many issues. It deals with production in relation to food availability; it addresses distribution in that, the produce should be accessed by all; it covers consumption in the sense that, individual food needs are met in order for that individual to be active and healthy. The availability and accessibility of food to meet individual food needs should also be sustainable. This implies that, early warning systems of food insecurity should monitor indicators related to food production, distribution and consumption. The performance of theseindicators, therefore, will detect whether a certain area or population is food secure or insecure in relation to the spirit of the above definition.

Food security is closely related to poverty and chronic food insecurity translates into high degree of vulnerability to famine and hunger. Ensuring food security presupposes elimination of that vulnerability. According to Sen (1981), the poor are vulnerable, because they do not have adequate means or entitlements to secure their access to food, even when food is available in local or regional markets. As Henry (1991) points out, although there is irrefutable evidence that poverty is the most evident common denominator among nations, communities or households afflicted by chronic

under-nourishment, it is not the sole determinant. The extent of access to gainful employment, to arable land, to sustainable technologies, and to other productive resources, are important factors influencing under nutrition.

1.3.3 Public Distribution System: Public distribution system as a general concept. It includes broad definition can be considered for the practical purpose of this study. PDS means distribution of essential commodities to a large number of people through a network of FPS on a recurring basis. The commodities are as follows:

- > Wheat
- > Rice
- > Sugar
- > Kerosene

PDS evolved as a major instrument of the Government's economic policy for ensuring availability of food grains to the public at affordable prices as well as for enhancing the food security for the poor. It is an important constituent of the strategy for poverty eradication and is intended to serve as a safety net for the poor whose number is more than 330 million and are nutritionally at risk. PDS with a network of about 4.99 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) is perhaps the largest distribution network of its type in the world.

1.3.4 Target Group: The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) was introduced w.e.f., June 1st 1997 which makes a clear distribution between the Below Poverty Line (BPL) populations would be identified in every state BPL family would be entitled to a certain quantity of food grains at specially subsidized prices. While BPL population were offered food grains at half the economic cast, the APL, who were not to have a fixed entitlement to food grains, were supplied grains at their economic cost. Thus, TPDS intends to target the subsidized provision of food grains to 'poor in all areas' unlike RPDS, which laid stress on 'all in poor areas'.

1.3.5 PDS impact on Poverty: Radhakrishna Report has also studied the decline in poverty as a result of PDS subsidies on poverty was moderate; subsidies were estimated to have reduced poverty by 1.6 % points in rural areas and 1.7 % points in urban areas. About 12 million persons (9 million in rural and 3 million in urban areas) may have moved out of poverty in 198-87 due to income transfers from PDS. As the absolute

number of poor in India was put at 274 million in 1986-87, these numbers are small, rather insignificant.

The poor impact of the scheme in poor states also underlines the need for strengthening PDS in these states. As long as the development processes is not able to reduce poverty effectively in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan, the continuance of the PDS in poor states stands justified. Rather the need of the hour is to encourage proper targeting to achieve of better result and to build commitment on the part of the poorer states to purpose PDS.

Particularly among the poorer households given the high income and price elasticity's for staple food subsidies in all probability are likely to result in higher consumption by the poor. This would have a positive impact on the nutritional status of the malnourished poor. This is clearly borne out by studies (Ashok Gulati; 1989). For example George's paper on of estimates of calories reduction indicates that, if rationing (food subsidy scheme) were discontinued in Kerala and Gujarat based on his earlier (1983) work, George calculated that in Kerala the calorie intake would go down by 46 per person among the highest income group. The highest income group and by 138 among the lower income group. The highest loss of 224 calories per person, however, is to the households of low middle income group. In Gujarat, the loss would be of the order of 178 calories per person in the highest income group and 192 calories per person in the lowest income group. A notable feature is that in which ever state PDS covered the rural poor, there has been an important in the welfare and nutrition levels of the poor (Radhakrishna and Indrakant, 1988) and in Andhra Pradesh, the white cardholders drive substantial benefits from the subsidized rice scheme (Indrakant1996).

1.3.6 Beneficiaries of PDS: The Central and State Government's undertake the responsibility to identify the eligible households/beneficiaries and issue a ration card also known as household supply card which enables them to avail the prescribed quality of food grains and/or other commodities-Below Poverty Line and Above Poverty Line. Defining BPL and APL families is based on the criteria like annual income, land holding, type of dwelling etc, which are decided by the Government from time to time. Out of the BPL families, the poorest of the poor to the extent of the target are selected for Anthyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) Scheme and Annapoorna Scheme. For each of

these categories, the states issues ration cards of different colors to the beneficiaries to easily differentiate between them.

A fundamental element in this category is the household's asset base. A household with several assets can more effectively maintain its consumption level by disposing of some of these assets. Its ability to do so increases according to the proportion of assets held in liquid form. Thus, the value and liquidity of assets are important determinants of a household's ability to cope with shocks to acquirement.

The credit market nature is an equally important factor. In theory, a perfect credit market would minimize the effect of an income shock by allowing the household to achieve whatever degree of consumption-smoothing it desires. But credit markets, particularly rural credit markets, are far from perfect. While in most rural societies the existence of informal moneylenders and a reciprocal system of mutual help among friends,relatives and neighbours provide some scope for consumption-smoothing, access to these mechanisms vary enormously.

At the macro-level, the important determinants of consumption-smoothing include the operation of buffer stocks and the public food grain distribution system. If the shock to acquirement is the result of higher prices and the reduced availability of food on the market, then the operation of a food buffer stock would ensure consumption-smoothing by infusing a greater supply into the market and lowering prices. A well-functioning public distribution system, especially one that provides free or subsidized food, would also contribute to consumption smoothing under most shock situations.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Food is a basic necessity of life. Its importance is seen in the fact that it is a basic means of sustenance and an adequate food intake, in terms of quantity and quality, is a key for healthy and productive life. The importance of food is also shown in the fact that it accounts for a substantial part of a typical Indian household budget.

Various foods serve as important "vehicles" for taking nutrients into the body and the body and bringing about human pleasure, hence, the need for food to be taken in the right quantity and quality. To measure the quality of any food taken, there are

classes of essential nutrients, which must be combined, in appropriate proportion to ensure a balanced food intake. These include carbohydrates, protein, fats and oil, vitamins and minerals.

A country's economic development is dependent on its factor endowment. This includes the non-human and human resources. The productive capacity of the human resources is however a function of how well fed they are. Food problem, with regards to quality and quantity, is one of the characteristics of developing countries like India.

Public Distribution System in India is a major intervention aimed at ensuring food security to all the poor, especially the vulnerable sections of the society. It not only provides essential commodities, including food grains, to more than 6 million families on regular basis, but also ensures the prices stability in the market. The PDS operates through a large distribution network of around 4.89 lakh fair price shops. Originally the PDS was stated in 1960 and later on re-designated as targeted public distribution system in June 1997. Functioning of the PDS is the joint responsibility of the Central Government and State Governments, while the central Government is responsible for the procurement and transportation of wheat/rice, sugar, kerosene oil, edible oils etc. Up to the principle distribution Centers, the state governments are responsible for the identification of families living Below the Poverty Line, issue of ration cards, appointment of dealers for the distribution of essential commodities to the vulnerable sections of the society through FPSs.

Various studies, undertaken by especially appointed enquiry committees/commissions and independent researcher come to conclusion that PDS or TPDS have failed in serving the objective of making food grains available to the poor. If it had, the fallen on average-as it has consistently over the last two decades (GOI, 2007, vol. 111, pp. 134-35). The programme evaluation organization establishes in one of its studies (2005) that TPDS has large scale exclusion and inclusion error with a large number of ghost cards. The share of leakages in off-take from the central pool is abnormally high. PDS has also failed in its objective of price stabilization, observes the study, because of faulty allocation system, which often ignores demand-supply constraints. Central vigilance committee in PDS, under the chairmanship of Justice D.P. Wadhwa (2009) observes that there is lot of pilferage at every level in PDS along with

multiple ration cards under a single name. Planning Commission has no hesitation to accept that for every Rs.4 spent on PDS, only Re.1 reaches the poor and 57% of PDS food grains does not reach the intended people. Several studies confirm that a thriving nexus is in operation between transporters, fair price shops and officials of the department including anti-hoarding cell and the entire network of civil supplies. Therefore this study of public distribution system has been undertaken from a socio-economic and welfare perspective in Kalaburagi district.

1.4.1 Research Questions

When one examines the objectives and operationalisation of public distribution system from socio-economic and welfare perspective certain significant questions come up. Have weaker sections including women are meant to benefit from the PDS programmes been involved in its design and implementation? Have the programmes reached weaker sections for whose welfare it is designed? Have the projects been able to implement the programme as it was charted at the policy level? How the target groups have been identified? How are they functioning? Does the activity perpetuate traditional typed roles of weaker sections or give an opportunity to weaker sections for exploring new roles and responsibilities? Have the PDS and ANNA BHAGYA Scheme increased weaker sections awareness about themselves and their empowerment? Have it increased their productive efficiency by giving their training? Have it increased their income, if yes have they been able to have control over that income? Most importantly have the programmes empowered weaker sections? This study addresses these important questions.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The present study is mainly based on the following objectives;

1. To study the performance of public distribution system in food security in India and in Karnataka.
2. To evaluate the impact of public distribution system on improvement of food security of the BPL households in the study area.

3. To analyse the role of public distribution system on reduction in poverty among the poorer sections of the society in Kalaburagi District.
4. To study the problems involved in the effective implementation of the public distribution system.
5. To suggest measure for further policy implications

1.6. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been framed in the present study.

1. Quality of goods available through PDS for BPL families is satisfactory in the study area.
2. There is positive impact of Public Distribution System on BPL household's food security.
3. Due to Public Distribution System many households crossed the poverty line to lead better standard of living in the study area.

1.7 Research Methodology

This research study is based on both descriptive and analytical method. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected from 300 respondents through field survey with the help of questionnaire schedule by using random sampling method. Secondary data is collected from books, journals, Planning Commission Reports and the Ministry of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department in Indiaand Karnataka. The data has been collected for the period from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

The following Methodology and Sampling are followed. Survey method was followed for this study. By following multi-stage random sampling three talukas viz., one backward, one moderate, and one developed were selected, in the second stage five villages from each Taluk were selected. From each village 20 respondents (10 weaker sections and 10 non-weaker sections) were selected using simple random sampling. The sampling frame is as follows;

1.8 Relevance of the Study

PDS is an important planning scheme and greater importance is given to this scheme as heavy expenditure is made on this. This study has greater relevance because, the Government, Policy Makers and the Planning Commission should know: -

1. Weather the PDS scheme has reached right beneficiaries?
2. Weather the implementation of the scheme is done as per the norms lay down?
3. Whether the women SHGs are effective in running PDS?
4. Whether to continue or discontinue the universal system of PDS?
5. What are all the malpractices that exist in this scheme?
6. What are the problems faced by the rural poor in availing the benefits of the scheme? and
7. What is the role of cooperative societies in running PDS?

1.9. Statistical tools for the Data Analysis

The data analysis has been carried out by using simple statistical methods like frequency, percentages and averages; these will help us to understand the gross root level realities. 't'-test has been used.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

The following are some of the limitations of the study

1. The present study is conducted in three taluks of Kalaburagi district namely Kalaburagi, Chinchoi and Afzalapur.
2. The study is confined to 300 respondents only.
3. Both weaker sections and non weaker sections beneficiaries are interviewed.
4. The data has been collected from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

1.11. Chapter Scheme

The present study is presented in six chapters. The chapter scheme of the study is as follows:

Chapter-I: Introduction

The first chapter is introductory in nature and spells out the objectives of the study, hypothesis and the methodology used in the study. This chapter serves as the foundation on the basis of which the other chapters of the study are developed.

Chapter-II: Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

The second chapter represents the review of literature relating to the role of public distribution system in reducing the poverty and finally research gaps have been identified based on the review of the previous studies.

Chapter-III: Food Security through Public Distribution System in India-An Overview

This chapter represents the public distribution system in India, it includes the importance of the PDS and its achievement in India. It includes the state-wise achievement of PDS in India.

Chapter-IV: Performance of Public Distribution System in Food Security in Karnataka - An Analysis

This chapter deals with the performance of public distribution system in the state of Karnataka. District-wise analysis has been provided in this chapter.

Chapter-V: Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This chapter provides the socio-economic background of the sample respondents in Kalaburagi district. The analysis starts with the brief profile of Kalaburagi district. This chapter is the core chapter of the present study.

Chapter-VI: Summary of Major Findings of the Study and Suggestions

This chapter sets out a summary, findings and policy implications of the study. It also attempts to indicate the possible changes in the public distribution system procedure in India.

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